

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

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1. (Currently Amended) A decoding apparatus comprising:

- B'
- a) an input means for inputting unit, arranged to input a
bitstream obtained by coding a plurality of object data in units of objects and multiplexing the coded data, wherein ~~the bitstream includes management data for managing the plurality of objects, and the plurality of object data are hierarchized data which provide a desired~~
scalability in accordance with a combination among the plurality of object data;
 - b) a separation means for separating unit, adapted to separate
coded data of each object from the bitstream;
 - c) ~~selection means for selecting a predetermined object from the~~
~~plurality of objects contained in the bitstream~~ a desired scalability input unit, arranged to
input data indicating a grade of the desired scalability;
 - d) an outputting means for decoding unit, adapted to decode the
coded data of the object in accordance with the ~~management data~~ indicating the grade of
the desired scalability, and outputting the decoded data; and
 - e) a synthesis means for synthesizing unit, adapted to synthesize
the object data outputted by said outputting means unit.

2. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the bitstream is a bitstream complying with MPEG4.

3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the bitstream input to said input means unit is scrambled, and said input means unit comprises a descrambling means for descrambling unit, arranged to descramble the scrambled bitstream.

4. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the management data is IPMP data that is not scrambled the bitstream includes intellectual property data that is not encoded, and said descrambling means unit descrambles the scrambled bitstream in accordance with the intellectual property data.

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 3, ~~wherein~~ said apparatus further comprises comprising a read means for reading unit, adapted to read descrambling data for descrambling the scrambled data, the descrambling data being stored in an IC card, ~~and wherein~~ said descrambling means unit descrambles the scrambled bitstream in accordance with the descrambling data read by said read means unit.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, ~~wherein~~ said apparatus further comprises comprising a read means for reading unit, adapted to read selection data for selecting the object, the selection data being stored in an IC card, and

said a selection means selects unit, adapted to select the predetermined object from the plurality of objects in accordance with the selection data read by said read ~~means~~ unit.

7. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of objects include at least a video object.

8. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the plurality of objects include at least an audio object.

B' 9. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein the plurality of objects include at least a scene description object.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a monitor means for monitoring unit, arranged to monitor the object data synthesized by said synthesis ~~means~~ unit.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a communication means for performing unit, arranged to perform data communication with an external device, said communication device transmitting, to said external device, information representing that the bitstream is decoded.

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein said communication ~~means~~ unit performs data communication through the Internet.

13. (Currently Amended) A decoding method comprising the steps of:
inputting a bitstream obtained by coding a plurality of object data in units of objects and multiplexing the coded data, wherein ~~the bitstream includes management data for managing the plurality of objects, and the plurality of object data are~~ hierarchized data which provide a desired scalability in accordance with a combination among the plurality of object data;

separating coded data of each object from the bitstream;

~~selecting a predetermined object from the plurality of objects contained in the bitstream~~ inputting data indicating a grade of the desired scalability;

decoding the coded data of the object in accordance with the management data indicating the grade of the desired scalability, and outputting the decoded data; and

synthesizing the object data outputted in said decoding step.

14. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program, said program comprising steps of:

a) input processing of inputting a bitstream obtained by coding a plurality of object data in units of objects and multiplexing the coded data, wherein ~~the bitstream includes management data for managing the plurality of objects, and the plurality of object data are~~ hierarchized data which provide a desired scalability in accordance with a combination among the plurality of object data;

b) separation processing of separating coded data of each object from the bitstream;

c) ~~selection processing of selecting a predetermined object from the plurality of objects contained in the bitstream~~ desired scalability inputting processing of inputting data indicating a grade of the desired scalability;

d) ~~outputting processing of decoding the coded data of the object in accordance with the management data~~ indicating the grade of the desired scalability, and outputting the decoded data; and

e) ~~synthesis processing of synthesizing the object data outputted in said outputting processing.~~

15. (New) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of object data includes data of different resolutions.